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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico

Cuba: draft resolution

The Special Committee,

Bearing in mind the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, as well as the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

Considering that the decade of the 1990s, which will soon draw to a close, was proclaimed by the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and the eighteen resolutions and decisions adopted by the Special Committee on the question of Puerto Rico, contained in the reports of the Special Committee to the General Assembly,

Recalling that 25 July 2000 marks the one hundred and second anniversary of the intervention in Puerto Rico by the United States of America,

Further recalling the diverse initiatives taken by the political representatives of Puerto Rico and the United States in the past eleven years, which have thus far failed to set in motion the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

Stressing the need for the United States to lay the groundwork for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

Taking into account the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Convention of the people of Puerto Rico as part of the search for realistic procedures which would make it possible to launch the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

Aware that Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, has been used for over fifty years by the United States Marines to carry out military manoeuvres, thus limiting access by the civilian population to a space scarcely a quarter of the island, and having an impact on the health of the population, the environment and the economic and the social development of the Territory,

Regretting that, after a year of inactivity, which was welcomed by the people of Puerto Rico, the Government of the United States has resumed its military manoeuvres and bombings on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, removing and incarcerating peaceful demonstrators and imposing further restrictions on the civilian population,

Noting the consensus among the Puerto Rican people on the urgency of halting military manoeuvres on Vieques Island and on the return of occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico,

Further noting the consensus among the people of Puerto Rico in favour of the release of all Puerto Rican prisoners who have been serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to Puerto Rico's independence,

Noting with satisfaction the release of eleven Puerto Rican political prisoners,

Further noting that the Final Document of the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena de Indias on 8 and 9 April 2000, reaffirms the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence on the basis of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and requests the Special Committee to continue actively pursuing the issue of Puerto Rico,

Having heard statements and testimonies representative of various viewpoints among the people of Puerto Rico and their social institutions,

Having considered the report of the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the implementation of the resolutions concerning Puerto Rico,

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the applicability of the fundamental principles of that resolution to the question of Puerto Rico;

2. *Reiterates* that the Puerto Rican people constitute a Latin American and Caribbean nation that has its own and unequivocal national identity;

3. *Reaffirms its hope*, and that of the international community, that the Government of the United States of America will assume its responsibility of expediting a process that will allow the Puerto Rican people to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico;

4. *Notes with satisfaction* that, during the past year, progress has been achieved towards the implementation of a mechanism ensuring the full participation of representatives of all viewpoints prevailing in Puerto Rico, such as the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Conference of the people of Puerto Rico;

5. *Expresses its hope* that the General Assembly of the United Nations will give comprehensive consideration to the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects;

6. *Encourages* the Government of the United States, in line with the need to guarantee to the Puerto Rican people their legitimate right to self-determination and the protection of their human rights, to order the halt of its armed forces' military drills and manoeuvres on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, return the occupied

land to the people of Puerto Rico, halt the persecution, arrests and harassment of peaceful demonstrators, respect fundamental human rights, such as the right to health and economic development, and decontaminate the impact areas;

7. *Welcomes* the release of eleven Puerto Rican prisoners and *expresses its hope* that the President of the United States will release all Puerto Rican political prisoners serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico;

8. *Notes with satisfaction* the report prepared by the Rapporteur, in compliance with its resolution of 6 July 1999;

9. *Requests* the Rapporteur to report to the Special Committee in the year 2001 on the implementation of the present resolution;

10. *Decides* to keep the question of Puerto Rico under continuous review.